changes in West Bengal have since been cleared by Government; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI *P. Y.*. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) and (b) As per draft 8th Plan of the Telecom Department, modernisation and upgradation of Telecom network will be done through

— replacement of life expired and worn-out exchanges;

replacement of life expired and unserviceable transmission systems by digital systems;

replaemcent of all small Electro-mechanica 1 exchanges (upto 100 lines) by electronic exchanges;

— replacement of all manual ex changes by automatic exchanges by March, 1994.

West Bengal telecom network is also covered by these proposals, 83 Electro.mechanical exchanges have been converted into electronic exchanges uptil now. During 1991-92 it is planned to modernise telephone exchanges by *way* of replacing 90 more telephone exchanges by electronic ones.

Implementation of New Education Policy

183. SHRI DEBABRATA BISWAS: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DE-to state the progress make in the implementation of New Education policy till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS) WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPART-MENT OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT): (KUMARI MA-MATA BANERJEE): The National Policy on Education (NPE) was adopted by the Parliament in 1986. Following the NPE a large number of important centrally sponsored programmes were launched. These include

(i) Operation Blackboard

(ii) Non-formal education for drop-outs, working children and girls who cannot attend school owing to obligations at home

(iii) Reorganisation and restructuring of teacher education, including establishment of District Institutes of Education & Training, and giving statutory status to National Council of Teacher Education

(iv) Vocationalisation of Secondary Education

(v) Strengthening and consoiida tion of Higher Education, with restoration of academic calendar ir universities/colleges, autonomou: colleges, establishment of curricu. lum development centres and aca, demic staff colleges, and accountability of the teachers

(vi) Establishment of All Indi; Council of Technical Education a: a statutory body

(vii) Modernisation of Technics Education

Details of implementation of thes and other programmes are included in the Annual Reports of the Depart ment for the years since the 'formula tion of NPE, which were laid on the Table of the House.

Formation of water grids

184. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHA1 DRAKANT BHANDARE: Will th Minister of WATER RESOURCES t pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have lats ly been considering the question linking different rivers and formir grids;

(b) if so, what are the proposals in this regard; and

(c) what decisions, if any, have been taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RE. SOURCES (SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA): (a) to (c) The Govern ment had prepared national perspectives for optimum water resources utilisation through linking of different rivers which comprises of two components viz., the Himalayan rivers development and the Peninsular rivers development,

The National Water Development Agency a registered Society under the Ministry of Water Resources has beer, entrusted with the work of formulating proposals after survey and investigations. The Agency has completed pre.feasibility reports on 7 water transfer links for the Peninsular rivers. The concerned State Govern. ments are represented on the Society and implementation need consensus on the schemes.

Privatisation of mines

185. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to privatise some of the unviable and/or unprofitable mines of different types all over the country: and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) There is no such proposal. How. ever, if mining is noe corried out by the lessee in accordance with terms and conditions of the mining lease, the lease can be determined according to the provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act.

Vocational education

186. SHRIMATI MIRA DAS: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what are the steps being taken to encourage vocational education in the country; and

(b) the details of amount allocated and spent so 'far in the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS) WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF MTNISTER OF STATE EN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT) (KUMARI MAMTA BANERJEE): (a) In pursuance of the priority accorded to the Vocational Education Programme in the National Policy on Education (1986), a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Vocationalisation of Secondary Education was started with effect from February, 1988. A Joint Council of Vocational Education (JCVE) under the Union Education Minister has been set up at the national level to ensure proper planning and coordination of the Vocational Programmes. Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme substantial financial assistance is provided to States UT's for running Vocational courses at the plus 2 level. Assistance is also provided for the required technical resource support and management structure. Efforts rea being made to run job-linked courses in collaboration with industry and various MinistrieslDe-partments. The recruitment rules for Group 'C posts are being reviewed to make the Vocational pass-outs eligible for employment in Govt/ Quasi-Govt. jobs. To 'facilitate self employment amongst the vocational pass-outs it has been decided to give them preference under the Scheme of Self Employment for Educated Un-